



# President's Report to the PCCD Board of Trustees



October 12, 2021

*Dr. Nathaniel Jones III, President*

# ACCESO

Adelante con Comunidad, Excelencia, Sabiduría y Oportunidad

## ACCESO Kicks Off its Second Year of Programming with a New Workshop Series and Lively Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrations

College of Alameda's (CoA) Adelante con Comunidad, Excelencia, Sabiduría y Oportunidad (ACCESO) program is now in its second year of operation and going strong. Currently enrolling 180 students, up from 60 last fall, ACCESO is the College's primary project under its \$2.9 million Hispanic Serving Institution Grant (HSI), which was awarded in fall 2019.

Under the leadership of ACCESO/Puente Programs Director **Horacio Corona Lira**, the ACCESO team also has grown this fall with the addition of a part-time counselor, a student success coach, and eight student peer mentors.

The ACCESO Program primarily serves and supports Latinx students who are planning to earn a certificate, degree, or transfer within three years. While ACCESO's mission is to expand opportunities and improve the educational attainment of Latinx students, the program also is open to all CoA students.

This fall ACCESO is offering over 25 workshops led by faculty and staff on various topics designed to support student success, including academic support, transfer, and study strategies. The [ACCESO Workshop Series](#) has been widely promoted to all CoA students in order to encourage broad participation.

In addition to the exciting new ACCESO workshop series, Director Corona Lira and Director of Office of Student Activities and Campus Life **Natalie Rodriguez** organized a series of college-wide events in celebration of Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month.

Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month program kicked off on September 23, 2021, with a virtual screening of the film *Primero, Sueño*, followed by a live discussion with Film Director **Andres Lira**. Over 20 students, faculty, and staff participated in the lively conversation, focusing on the plights of farm workers in California's central valley, and reflecting on their personal experiences related to topics of immigration, poverty, and the need to uplift one another through participating in important cultural engagement opportunities like the events and workshops offered through ACCESO.

*The mission of the College of Alameda is to serve the educational needs of its community by providing comprehensive and flexible programs and resources to empower students to achieve their goals.*

## CoA Welcomes New Mental Health Counseling Interns



*Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Trainee Erica Gibbons*

Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Trainee **Erica Gibbons** was born and raised in the East Bay. She is currently receiving her masters in Marriage and Family Therapy at the University of San Francisco, where she is pursuing her therapy license. Erica followed the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) track through Peralta and transferred to the University of California (UC), Berkeley where she studied and taught Ethnic Studies. She is dedicated to community healing in the fight against identity-based oppression, and advocates for the mental liberation of all folks.

While not in the therapy office, Ms. Gibbons enjoys hiking and listening to soulful house music with a large cup of black coffee.



*MFT Trainee Elizabeth Montes*

MFT Trainee **Elizabeth Montes** comes from a tiny town in Northern California called Esparto. She attended UC Berkeley where she studied human biology and psychology. She worked as a behavior technician for a couple of years before enrolling at The Wright Institute where she is pursuing a Masters in Counseling Psychology Degree in order to get licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Ms. Montes is proud of her background as a low-income Mexican-American, first-generation college student and is passionate about serving marginalized communities.



*From left ink and watercolor drawings title Buddha and Quetzalcóatl, by CoA art student Ms. He Jin Eng.*

## Art Department Encourages Students to Express Their Diversity

The East Bay is one of the most diverse and eclectic regions in the country, populated by people from just about every conceivable background and walk of life. Art Professor **Drew Burgess** encourages his students to creatively express their cultural backgrounds and experiences in their art. In Ms. **He Jin Eng's** art, Professor Burgess sees a unique and beautiful synthesis of multi-cultural expression and artistic creativity.

He Jin Eng grew up in Mexico City and now lives in the Bay Area. Her wonderful depictions of Buddha and Quetzalcóatl, one of the major deities of the ancient Mexican pantheon, from a class assignment, provides an interesting visual bridge across cultures.